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RUEHDT/AMEMBASSY DILI IMMEDIATE 0092  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE 9896  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE 3662  
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON IMMEDIATE 3455  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 6496  
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SUBJECT: Coral Triangle States Reaffirm Commitment to Conserve  
Marine Biodiversity CABLE IS RESENT DUE TO TRANSMISSION ERRORS

Ref: A) State 103448; B) Jakarta 03355; C) Kuala Lumpur 736; D)  
Jakarta 1990; E) Kuala Lumpur 0869; F) Kuala Lumpur 0668; G) 07  
State 83478

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11. Summary: Officials from the six nations of the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security (CTI) signed the "Manila Resolution" at the second CTI Senior Officials Meeting in Manila on October 23. The Manila Resolution reaffirms commitment by the six states to conserve the Earth's greatest marine biodiversity zone while effectively managing fisheries, food security, and poverty reduction. The delegates adopted a framework for a CTI Regional Plan of Action that they committed to finalize at a ministerial meeting set for February 2009 and to present as a deliverable at a May 15, 2009 CTI summit meeting in Manado, Indonesia. End Summary.

#### The Coral Triangle Initiative

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12. The "Coral Triangle" includes the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste, and Papua New Guinea. This 5.7 million square km area of ocean and islands has the highest marine biodiversity on earth. It provides livelihood for 120 million people and food for many more. The area is threatened by over- and destructive fishing, land- and sea-based pollution, and climate change (Ref A). The CTI has made steady progress since Indonesian President Yudhoyono first proposed this multilateral partnership in August 2007 to preserve the area's resources, to manage at-risk fisheries, and to ensure regional food security. The CTI builds on over a decade of U.S.-investment in coastal resource management, fisheries and marine-protected area work in the region, through programs such as the USAID Sulu-Sulawesi Seas Marine Ecoregion Program, USAID bilateral programs in Indonesia and the Philippines, and State-funded marine and coastal programs in the South Pacific.

#### Senior Officials Meetings and USG Funds

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13. The USG initially announced intended CTI support of \$4.3 million during the first CTI Senior Officials Meeting, held in Bali in December 2007 (Ref B). In recognition of the CTI's potential, USG pledges have grown and now approach \$40 million. In addition to those pledges, other USG programs support the CTI, including USAID

bilateral coastal-marine management programs in Indonesia and the Philippines. Post's International Visitor and Science Fellows Programs have both focused on the CTI. National Science Foundation and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration scientists support CTI-related research involving U.S. universities.

¶4. USG support has helped to leverage other financing. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will administer a four-year \$63 million Global Environment Facility grant that includes projects from UN agencies. A "Program Integrator" will support and help coordinate the programs and activities of USG CTI partners and other multilateral and bilateral donors to the CTI. USAID in Bangkok hosted the CTI Development Partners meetings prior to the Manila meeting, and the ADB hosted a Partners meeting in Manila during the Senior Officials Meeting. The USG, ADB, Australian Government, NGO partners, and international organizations worked to harmonize approaches to CTI support and developed a partnership plan to build capacity.

#### Manila Senior Officials Meeting Accomplishments

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¶5. The "Manila Resolution" acknowledged threats to Coral Triangle resources and the need for action; it confirmed that key goals of the ministerial (February) and summit (May) meetings will be to adopt national plans, announce programs, and finalize a regional action plan. The delegates agreed to retain text noting the vital need to synchronize CTI with existing regional fisheries management organizations. The parties also affirmed that the CTI's geographic coverage may include the territorial waters within their exclusive economic zones. There had been concern that Malaysia might not participate in the CTI (Refs C and F). Its policy had been to address CTI goals through its Sulu-Sulawesi Seas Marine Ecoregion Initiative (initiated with a State Department, and later

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USAID-funded grant to Conservation International and World Wildlife Fund - Refs D and E). USAID's Regional Development Mission/Asia and World Wildlife Fund privately met with the Malaysian CTI delegation and persuaded the Malaysians to participate on the condition that CTI activities in Malaysia are properly coordinated with the appropriate national government agencies.

#### USG and Donor Partners Achievements

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¶6. During the opening ceremony of the second Senior Officials Meeting, U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines announced approximately \$40 million in USG pledges for the CTI, a significant increase from the initial USG announcement of \$4.3 million in December 2007. The Manila Resolution specifically welcomes the support of the CTI Development Partners, which include the ADB, the Global Environmental Fund, the United States, Germany, Australia, and international NGOs. The CTI Development Partners' key contributions include ongoing development of common performance indicators in a consolidated matrix and an electronic database for use by all the CTI donors, member nations, and NGOs. The Development Partners have also examined coordination mechanisms used by the Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia. The Development Partners' working groups, with extensive participation by USAID, are developing plans for coordination mechanisms, national and regional financing mechanisms, monitoring/evaluation indicators, and database/information management systems.

#### Remaining Challenges

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¶7. Delegates called for another coordination meeting to ensure proper development of the national action plans and committed to announce at least one concrete national program per party at the May 2009 CTI summit during the World Oceans Conference. Three member countries agreed to lead the following working groups: coordination (Indonesia), monitoring/evaluation (Philippines), and financial management/resources (Indonesia). The CTI NGO consortium is using the funding from the Department of State to provide expert information management and financial planning staff to the

Secretariat.

Next Steps and Calendar

18. Participants laid out the following calendar:

NOVEMBER 10-14, 2009 - The Government of Australia hosted a workshop in Townsville, Australia that brought together policy, management and technical participants from the member countries to discuss national and regional priorities and needs and challenges in implementing the CTI Regional and National Plans of Action. The participants left Townsville with a specific action agenda to establish their National CTI Coordination Committees and to finalize their National Plans of Action in time for the next CTI Coordinating Meeting in January 2009.

JANUARY 2009 - The fourth CTI Coordination Committee Meeting will be held in Malaysia or Indonesia, to finalize a Regional Plan of Action and draft CTI Summit Declaration.

FEBRUARY 19, 2009 - Ministerial Meeting in Madang, Papua New Guinea to endorse a Regional Plan of Action, produce elements of a CTI Leader's Declaration, formally launch the CTI Development Partners working group with Government donors, NGOs, international organizations, and others.

MAY 15, 2009 - An Inaugural Summit (following the World Oceans Conference) would adopt the Regional Plan of Action and announce at least one concrete initiative of each country.

19. This is a joint State-USAID cable.

KENNEY